

M.C.C.A.

Richard Dutremble, President
York County

Norm Fournier, Vice President
Aroostook County

George Jabar, Secretary-Treasurer
Kennebec County

Stephen Gorden, Past President
Cumberland County

William Blodgett, Emeritus
Lincoln County



4 Gabriel Drive, Suite 2
Augusta, ME 04330
207-623-4697
www.mainecounties.org

Lauren Haven
Administrator

MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

MCCA Offices in Augusta

November 8th, 2023, 10:00 am

1. Call to Order

MCCA President Richard Dutremble called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 am.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Franklin – Comm. Bob Carlton
Kennebec – Admin. Scott Ferguson proxy for Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman
Lincoln – Comm. William Blodgett
Oxford – Exec. Asst. Abby Shanor proxy for Comm. Steven Merrill
Penobscot – Comm. Peter Baldacci
Piscataquis – Manager Mike Williams proxy for Comm. Paul Davis
Somerset – Comm. Robert Sezak
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Garrett Mason
Hancock – Comm. John Wombacher
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Piscataquis – Comm. Paul Davis
Sagadahoc – Comm. Carol Grose
Washington – Comm. Chris Gardner

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
Verrill Dana – Lobbyist Jim Cohen

2. Consent Agenda:
 - 2.1. Approval of the Agenda
 - 2.2. Approval of the Minutes
 - 2.3. Finance Reports – Lauren Haven

Comm. Blodgett **moved** to approve the consent agenda, **seconded** by Comm. Sezak, and the motion **passed** with no opposition.

3. Officer Reports:
 - 3.1. Secretary/Treasurer, George Jabar
 - 3.2. Vice President, Norm Fournier

Comm. Fournier reported that Bruce Flaherty from the Spirit of America Foundation was interested in presenting awards at the 2024 Convention of Maine Counties. The topic was likely to be revisited during the planning process for the convention.

- 3.3. President Report, Richard Dutremble

Comm. Dutremble reported that he would be out of state and unavailable for the Annual General Membership meeting in January. He asked attendees if the meeting date should be rescheduled. After some discussion about dates, Comm. Sezak **moved** to keep the meeting date as January 10th. The **motion** was **seconded** by Comm. Gorden, and the motion **passed** **unanimously**.

4. Standing Committee Reports:
 - 4.1. NACo Update: Peter Baldacci & Sharyn Pohlman

Comm. Baldacci reported that both he and Comm. Pohlman planned to attend the NACo Legislative Conference February 10th-14th, 2024 in Washington D.C. He urged counties to send additional representatives from their own counties to participate in the event.

- 4.2. Convention Planning Committee – Lauren Haven
 - 4.2.1. Consideration of the 2024 Convention

Admin. Lauren Haven requested that the Board authorize the Convention Planning Committee to move forward with estimates for the 2024 Convention. The convention attendance in 2023 had been lower than the attendance in prior years. However, it was a good start for the first full conference after COVID and she was hopeful they would have even more support next year. She asked if there was any county interested in hosting the event. There were no volunteers. Lauren said the group would look for appropriate venues and then approach the counties. The Convention

Planning Committee would do as much of the legwork as possible to keep the county from feeling too much pressure. Comm. Baldacci moved to commence planning for the conference, seconded by Comm. Sezak, and the motion passed.

Comm. Gorden suggested the group work on a plan for the following year for budgeting purposes. This would also give the hosting county more of a heads-up for their own planning. Lauren agreed and said the committee had done this in the past, but they didn't know whether they could get enough commissioners to participate in the future. Only 23 out of the 58 commissioners attended the 2023 conference so it would be important to try to get more support.

4.3. Budget and Finance Committee – Norm Fournier

Comm. Fournier reported that the first Budget and Finance Committee meeting had been postponed due to scheduling conflicts. The meeting would occur on November 30th to deliberate the preliminary numbers on the rough draft of the 2024 budget. The draft would be revised following the meeting and brought forward to the Board of Directors for consideration in December. Any further revisions would be made with a recommendation from the Board to present the budget for final approval at the Annual General Membership meeting in January.

4.4. Legislative Policy Committee – Steve Gorden, Chair

4.4.1. James Cohen, Verrill Dana

4.4.1.1. Legislative Update

4.4.1.2. Next Steps

Comm. Gorden stated we were entering the second year of the biennial legislative session. It would be important to determine the most important topics in order to develop legislative goals, and secure sponsors for any bills that MCCA would like to put forth.

Lobbyist Jim Cohen reported that there was a legislative council meeting planned to review hundreds of bill requests and bills which had been carried over. Several committees were already meeting now.

LD 630, "An Act to Ensure Rural Law Enforcement Services in Maine" sponsored by Representative Anne Graham of North Yarmouth was our rural patrol bill. One sentence in the bill language had been amended and there was no fiscal note. The implication was that if a Sheriff's office was contracted to perform the work, they would need to hire employees. Admin. Scott Ferguson said that they couldn't move money without a fiscal note. Attendees commented that the Maine State Police (MSP) could use the money from their budget since they were supposed to be doing it. Comm. Baldacci said that although the Penobscot bill regarding rural patrol failed, the message had been received. The MSP was ordered to do the job as stated in the Maine statute. Hardly any legislators were happy with the presentation given by MSP. They had received 18 new positions and were still not doing it. Admin. Scott Ferguson said it would be important for

commissioners to write and speak with their legislators as well as come to public hearings to show their support and the importance of supporting rural communities.

Mr. Cohen said the jail funding issue had three components. First, the draft that Senator Pinny Beebe-Center had agreed to sponsor was never submitted. However, the bill could still be “walked around” to gather support. Secondly, a presentation could be made at a Criminal Justice workshop. It might be a hypothetical story, the journey from arrest through incarceration, release, and post release programs. We could illustrate the services required and the cost of each piece as well as what the systems and services were lacking to reduce recidivism. Thirdly, we could continue to request additional funding through the supplemental budget. This was not the best practice, but jails could show the deficit and therefore, the need for more money. Admin. Scott Ferguson spoke about the reallocation workshop as being the best opportunity to lay a foundation for the future. They could concentrate on highlighting the unfunded mandates for jails.

5. Association Reports - MACCAM, MARP, MRODA, MSA, others.

Admin. Carrie Kipfer reported that the Blue Ribbon Commission to Study Emergency Medical Services in the State had reconvened. There were several possible models that could be used to regionalize emergency services. In this case, one size does not fit all. For example, Lincoln County has four ambulance services. Home rule wins, and each area wanted to keep some control over how services would be provided. A meeting was scheduled for next week for public comment. Comm. Baldacci said many of the unorganized territories have volunteer fire departments and ambulance services that are not reimbursed. Comm. Carlton said that Franklin County is regionalized and has recently expanded their services. He said for more information or advice they could call Mike Senecal (email: michael.senecal@mainehealth.org or his cell phone: 207-491-4952) who had done a presentation on the topic.

6. Adjournment

President Dutremble *invited a **motion to adjourn at approximately 11:35 a.m.** Comm. Fournier made the **motion, seconded by Comm. Blodgett, and the motion to adjourn was approved.** Many attendees remained to enjoy the catered lunch.*

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, George Jabar